

Form Name: NJCAA Committee Proposal Submission Form  
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Unique ID: 1442084932

## NJCAA Committee Proposal Submission Form

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**Your Name** Katie Willingham

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**Email** kwillingham1@columbiastate.edu

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**Submitting Committee** DI Softball

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**Proposal Title/Topic** NJCAA DIVISION I SOFTBALL POSTSEASON MODEL PROPOSAL

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**Type of Proposal** Tournament/Championship Format Change

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**Proposed Effective Date of Proposal** August 1, 2027

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**Rationale for Proposal** Executive Summary

The NJCAA Division I and Division II Softball and Baseball Committees propose a revised postseason model projected to begin in Spring 2028. The model introduces a Super Regional round for both sports, expands competitive equity, aligns with national championship trends, and provides institutions and host sites sufficient lead time for planning, budgeting, and facility preparation.

Under this proposal, postseason participation will include 32 teams per sport and division, advancing from Regional/District play to Super Regionals, and culminating in the NJCAA World Series.

Guiding Principles & Common Framework

- Improve the student-athlete postseason experience
- Align NJCAA championships with national best practices
- Ensure equitable geographic and regional representation
- Maintain fiscal and logistical responsibility
- Provide predictable timelines for host institutions

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**Please specify the NJCAA Handbook section(s) affected**

Varies between all 4 of us but generally Sections 3, 4, 8

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## Current NJCAA Handbook Language

### Qualification of Teams for Competition

A. Districts:

B. District and Region play must be completed on or before May 17, 2026

C. District Tournaments must be double elimination.

D. District Directors shall be responsible for the following:

1. 5B Meet with Region Director for all regions involved in the District Playoff to determine: i. Playoff format, dates, sites, and financial responsibilities. ii. West 1 Submit the completed and signed District Playoff Championship Contract to the Division I Softball Chair at the NJCAA Annual Meeting. 2. Notify the World Series Director and National Office when district results are complete

E. Substitution Process 1. In the event the district representative cannot attend, the district runner-up will take their place 2.

Section 4. If the runner-up cannot attend, the DI softball committee will select the replacement based on the same selection process used for at-large selections.

Section 4. If the runner-up cannot attend, the DI softball committee will select the replacement based on the same selection process used for at-large selections. World Series Seeding

A. The World Series shall consist of 16 District Representatives with 4 At-Larges

B. The NJCAA DI Softball Committee adheres to the NJCAA Sport Committee & Poll Process as listed in Section 9 of the NJCAA General Sport Code relating to World Series seeding.

C. Seeding will be completed no later than the day after the district cutoff date - May 18, 2026

D. Seeds 13-20 will play an opening round game, with the winners moving on to face the 1-4 seeds in the second round of play, and the losers moving into consolation play.

E. All teams will be seeded, and at-large bids will be chosen by the following criteria, listed in no particular order:

1. Overall, Body of Work/Record

2. 3. 4. Final regular season poll results. Results of Region/District playoffs.

Strength of Schedule (to include when teams have traveled outside their Region as well as contests played at neutral sites).

5. Quality Wins/Quality Losses/Bad Losses/teams in poll/teams in respective World Series

6. 7. 8. 9. Record against NJCAA Division I top 20 teams for the season Record against NJCAA Division I opponents Record against NJCAA Division II, NJCAA Division III, NWAC and CCCAA.

Participation and placement in respective Region/District Tournament.

10. Strength of Region/District. F. Section 5. Only games vs. NJCAA, NWAC, and CCCAA will be considered.

Section 8. NJCAA DI Softball Poll

A. The NJCAA DI Softball Committee adheres to the NJCAA Sport Committee & Poll Process listed in Section 9 of the NJCAA General Sport Code relating to poll procedures.

B. Poll Criteria

1. Overall record

2. 3. 4. 5. C. Record since last poll Last 10 games Record vs.

District opponents Record vs. DI, DII, DIII opponents Poll Dates:

Jan. 20<sup>^</sup>, Feb. 23, Mar. 2, Mar. 9, Mar. 16, Mar. 23, Mar. 30, Apr.

6, Apr. 14, Apr. 20, Apr. 27, May 4. <sup>^</sup>Preseason poll

## **Proposed NJCAA Handbook Language**

### Section 3. Qualification of Teams for Competition

National Tournament Structure: The National Tournament will be a 32 team national tournament consisting of automatic qualifiers determined by Region size with the remaining teams selected based on at-large criteria to fill out the 32 team bracket. Teams will be split into eight 4-team Super Regionals with the 8 winning teams advancing to the World Series.

2028 Important Dates:

Super Regional Host Bid Document Available: October 15, 2028

Super Regional Host Bid Document Submission Deadline: April 8, 2028

Super Regional Host Sites Awarded: April 24, 2028

Regional Completion Deadline: May 7, 2028

Tournament Qualifiers Notified: May 8, 2028

Bracket Reveal: May 9, 2028

Super Regionals: May 13-15, 2028

NJCAA World Series: May 23-27, 2028

Automatic Qualification Standards by Region

1-2 teams - Combine with another region

3-12 teams - 1 automatic bid

13+ teams - 2 automatic bids

Regions with automatic qualifiers may be combined with regions that do not have automatic qualifiers based on geography.

Automatic qualifiers will be finalized annually one month after the deadline for NJCAA membership dues.

At-Large Selection Criteria

## 1. Overall Body of Work

a. Overall Record, only to include games vs. NJCAA, NWAC, CCCAA, and Military Preparatory Schools will be considered.

### b. Strength of Schedule

i. Record vs. teams ranked in the poll in your division

ii. Record vs. teams ranked in the poll outside your division

iii. Record vs. region/conference opponents

iv. Record against non-region/non-conference opponents

v. Overall record on the road, at a neutral site, and at home

c. Overall record for last 20 games to include post season competition

### d. Massey Ratings

## 2. Strength of Region

a. Historical success of region, district, team at the national tournament over the previous 3 seasons

## Super Regional

A Super Regional Host manual will include additional information required for hosting as well as game times and other venue specific requirements.

Format: Each Super Regional shall be conducted as a four-team double-elimination tournament with the champion of each Super Regional site advancing to the NJCAA World Series.

## Schedule:

Day 1: Games 1 & 2

Day 2: Games 3, 4 & 5

Day 3: Games 6 & 7 (if necessary)

Site Selection: There shall be eight Super Regional sites selected by the Sport Committee with input from the Championships & Alignment Committee and the NJCAA National Office. Super Regional sites will be geographically placed throughout the country with no more than two sites being awarded to one region.

World Series:

The NJCAA World Series will be an eight-team double elimination tournament, consisting of two 4-team pods. Each pod winner will participate in a best 2 of 3 championship series.

Day 1: Games 1-4

Day 2: Games 5-10

Day 3: Games 11-14 (Games 12 and 14 are if necessary)

Day 4: Game 1 of Championship Series

Day 5: Games 2 and 3 (Game 3 is if necessary) of Championship Series

Section 8 NJCAA D1 Softball Poll

Poll Criteria: The NJCAA Division 1 Softball Poll shall be conducted using the same criteria as the At-Large Selection Criteria found in section 3 of the Division 1 Softball Sport Code.

\*\*\*The following sections of the Division I Softball Sport Code would be deleted for 2028 if this passes:\*\*\*

Section 3: would be replaced entirely by above

Section 4: would be replace entirely by above.

Section 8: Delete section A and B. Keep C

**Please include any additional notes for your proposal. (Optional)**

The Division 1 & 2 Baseball & Softball Committees have spent extensive time working together to create a comprehensive proposal that is consistent across for both sports and both divisions. If approved it would create a national tournament format more consistent with other collegiate national tournaments. The attached document provides a detailed look at what the format will look like for both sports and divisions.

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**Please attach any supporting documentation here. (Optional)**

<https://njcaa.formstack.com/admin/download/file/19286162182>

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IP Address: 38.65.61.211  
Unique ID: 1442084396

## NJCAA Committee Proposal Submission Form

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**Your Name** Chris Robinson

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**Email** chris.robinson@jcc.edu

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**Submitting Committee** DII Softball

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**Proposal Title/Topic** NJCAA DIVISION II SOFTBALL POSTSEASON MODEL PROPOSAL

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**Type of Proposal** Tournament/Championship Format Change

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**Proposed Effective Date of Proposal** AUGUST 1ST, 2027

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**Rationale for Proposal** Executive Summary

The NJCAA Division I and Division II Softball and Baseball Committees propose a revised postseason model projected to begin in Spring 2028. The model introduces a Super Regional round for both sports, expands competitive equity, aligns with national championship trends, and provides institutions and host sites sufficient lead time for planning, budgeting, and facility preparation.

Under this proposal, postseason participation will include 32 teams per sport and division, advancing from Regional/District play to Super Regionals, and culminating in the NJCAA World Series.

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**Please specify the NJCAA Handbook section(s) affected** SECTION 3, 4, 8.

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**Current NJCAA Handbook  
Language**

Section 3. Qualification of Teams for Competition

A. Districts

B. District and Region play must be complete on or before May 10, 2026

C. All colleges must qualify in compliance with Article XII of the NJCAA bylaws.

D. District Tournaments must be double elimination.

E. District Directors shall be responsible for the following:

1. Determining date of their respective District Tournaments and notifying the World Series Director in writing by Jan. 1

2. Determining the playoff format, dates, sites and financial responsibility.

3. Complete and submit district playoff contract to the Division II Softball Chair at the Annual Meeting:

4. Notify the NJCAA National Office when the results of that tournament are known.

F. Substitution Process

G. 1. If a District champion cannot attend, the district runner-up will replace them

H. 2. If the District runner-up cannot attend, then the DII SB Committee will select a replacement based on the at-large criteria

Section 4. World Series Seeding

A. The World Series shall consist of 16 District Representatives with 4 At-Larges

B. The NJCAA DII Softball Committee adheres to the NJCAA Sport Committee & Poll Process as listed in Section 9 of the NJCAA General Sport Code relating to World Series seeding.

C. Seeding will be completed no later than the day after the district cutoff date - May 11, 2026

D. Seeding will be based on, in no order:

1. Over-all body of work

2. Final regular season poll

3. Results of post-season play (Region and District)

4. Strength of Schedule (to include neutral site and out of region consideration)

5. Quality wins and losses, bad losses. Looking at polls/teams who have qualified for WS

6. Record against NJCAA DII, DI, and DIII ranked teams

7. Record against NJCAA DII opponents

8. Record against all other NJCAA opponents as well as NWAC and CCCAA.

9. Participation and placement in respective post-season tournaments

10. Strength of Region/District

11. Only games against NJCAA, NWAC, and CCCAA will be considered in rankings and seeding

12. Regions/Districts cannot have more than three total World Series Bids

Section 8. NJCAA DII Softball Poll

A. The NJCAA DII Softball Committee adheres to the NJCAA Sport Committee & Poll Process listed in Section 9 of the NJCAA General Sport Code relating to poll procedures.

B. Poll Criteria

1. Overall record
2. Record since last poll
3. Last 10 games
4. Record vs. District opponents
5. Record vs. DI, DII, DIII opponent

## **Proposed NJCAA Handbook Language**

### Section 3. Qualification of Teams for Competition

National Tournament Structure: The National Tournament will be a 32 team national tournament consisting of automatic qualifiers determined by Region size with the remaining teams selected based on at-large criteria to fill out the 32 team bracket. Teams will be split into eight 4-team Super Regionals with the 8 winning teams advancing to the World Series.

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### b. Strength of Schedule

i. Record vs. teams ranked in the poll in your division

ii. Record vs. teams ranked in the poll outside your division

iii. Record vs. region/conference opponents

iv. Record against non-region/non-conference opponents

v. Overall record on the road, at a neutral site, and at home

c. Overall record for last 20 games to include post season competition

d. Massey Ratings

## 2. Strength of Region

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World Series:

The NJCAA World Series will be an eight-team double elimination tournament, consisting of two four team pods. Each pod winner will participate in a best two of three championship series.

Day 1: Games 1-4

Day 2: Games 5-10

Day 3: Games 11-14 (games 12 and 14 are if necessary games)

Day 4: Game 1 of championship series

Day 5: Games 2 & 3 (game 3 is if necessary)

Section 8 NJCAA DII Softball Poll

Poll Criteria: The NJCAA Division II Softball Poll shall be conducted using the same criteria as the At-Large Selection Criteria found in section 3 of the Division II Softball Sport Code.

\*\*\*The following sections of the Division II Softball Sport Code would be deleted for 2028 if this passes:\*\*\*

Section 3: would be replaced entirely by above

Section 4: would be replaced entirely by above

Section 8: Delete A, B

**Please include any additional notes for your proposal. (Optional)**

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